

*ARMY Declass/Release
Instructions On File*

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TAB D

"5. The timeliness of response of close air support and reconnaissance flights to land force requests." (S)

STAG Comment. (TS) A review of MILREPS and SITREPS indicates no complaints regarding responsiveness of CAS. There have been instances when the air cover at the beginning of an action has been absent or insufficient, but aircraft from the immediate support pool have been scrambled to meet the requirement. The New Focus Committee reported that CAS response time from request at contact level to delivery is usually within one hour. However, the average time is thought to be from 20 to 30 minutes. There have been reported instances where controllers have diverted preplanned aircraft from one target to meet the immediate and emergency requests from other units. This however appears normal procedure and certainly the system cannot be criticized for exercising this flexible control. There are 252 USAF, 159 USN, 98 USMC, and 128 VNAF aircraft with a primary or secondary role of CAS. This is a total of 637 aircraft generally available at any one time. The aircraft are capable of carrying an average load of 1.9 tons of ordnance on each sortie or a total of 1,210 tons of ordnance per day. The average number of attack sorties flown per day in SVN during the period 1 July to 27 November 1965 was 379 in support of CAS, interdiction, and armed recce. It must be remembered that some of the aircraft flying CAS, interdiction and armed recce in SVN are also flying strike, and armed recce missions in Laos and NVN. For example, in October there were 6,346 attack, escort, and recce sorties flown over NVN and 1,263 similar sorties flown over Laos or a total of 7,609 sorties flown outside SVN. This averages 253 sorties daily. The 379 attack sorties flown in SVN added to 253 sorties per day flown in NVN and Laos equals 632 as compared to an average available aircraft rate of 637.

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